

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 07250 181520Z

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCS-03 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SY-05 L-03

H-02 SCA-01 /061 W

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R 181432Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4953

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 7250

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PFOR, CASC, ET, US (HANNA, RICHARD)

REF: STATE 139932

1. FONMIN KIFLE WODAJO, WHO HAS REPORTEDLY BEEN ILL FOR SEVERAL DAYS, RECEIVED ME MORNING JUNE 18 FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION OF HANNA CASE. I WENT OVER ALL OF POINTS COVERED IN PARAS 1 THROUGH 4 AND PARA 8 OF REFTEL.

2. IN HIS RESPONSE KIFLE DID NOT REFER TO ANY REPORT HE HAD RECEIVED FROM CHARGE MEKBIB, NOR DID HE MAKE ANY COMMENT ON MY STATEMENTS REGARDING THE VARIOUS ASPECTS IN WHICH THE TREATY OF AMITY HAD BEEN VIOLATED. THESIS HE EMPHASIZED WAS THAT FOREIGN MINISTRY HAD BEEN DOING ITS UTMOST AND WOULD CONTINUE DO ITS UTMOST TO OBTAIN RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM WITH THE LEAST POSSIBLE EFFECT ON US-ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS. THERE WERE TWO REASONS WHY THE PROSECUTOR HAD EVENTUALLY DECIDED TO TRY HANNA. FIRSTLY, ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE IMPLICATING HANNA HAD BECOME AVAILABLE DURING THE MONTHS OF HIS DETENTION AS A RESULT OF POLICE INVESTIGATIONS AND THE TRIAL OF ARMENIANS ON CURRENCY CHARGES IN WHICH HANNA HAD GIVEN TESTIMONY. SECONDLY, PERSONS HAD BEEN SENTENCED IN THAT CASE ON CHARGES LESS SERIOUS THAN THOSE AGAINST HANNA AND THE PROSECUTOR THEREFORE DID NOT CONSIDER THAT HANNA COULD BE RELEASED WITHOUT TRIAL.

3. THE FOREIGN MINISTER SAID SEVERAL TIMES IN THE COURSE OF HIS
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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ADDIS 07250 181520Z

REMARKS THAT HE WOULD CONTINUE HIS EFFORTS TO SEE THAT THE TRIAL

OCCURS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND MOVES AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE. HE ALSO SAID SEVERAL TIMES THAT HE WILL ENDEAVOR TO SEE THAT THE CHARGES ON WHICH HANNA IS TRIED ARE "AS RESTRICTED AS POSSIBLE" SO THAT THEY WILL NOT "IMPINGE UPON US-ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS." I INTERPRET THIS AS A COMMITMENT ON HIS PART TO TRY AND BLOCK THE BRINGING OF ANY CHARGES REGARDING ESPIONAGE.

4. AT THE CONCLUSION OF THIS PART OF OUR CONVERSATION I RE-EMPHASIZED MY HOPE FOR A PROMPT AND SPEEDY TRIAL SO AS TO MINIMIZE THE DANGER OF HARMFUL EFFECTS UPON US-ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS.

5. MOFA AMERICAN AFFAIRS DIRECTOR HAMID HAS TOLD US HE HAS REMINDED THE PROSECUTOR THAT THE EMBASSY SHOULD BE NOTIFIED IN ADVANCE OF THE TRIAL IF THE CHARGES BROUGHT AGAINST HANNA INVOLVE THE US GOVERNMENT.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DETENTION, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: johnsorg
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ADDIS07250
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750212-0683
From: ADDIS ABABA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750636/aaaabgsx.tel
Line Count: 77
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 139932
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: johnsorg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25 AUG 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <09 DEC 2003 by johnsorg>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HANNA, RICHARD
TAGS: PINS, PFOR, CASC, ET, US, (HANNA, RICHARD), (WODAJ0, KIFLE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006